

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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R 272234Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2636

INFO ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MX

SUBJ: REACTION TO PAN ABSTENTION

REF: MEXICO 1051,

1. PUBLIC, GOM, AND PRI REACTION TO THE FAILURE OF THE
OPPOSITION PARTY OF NATIONAL ACTION TO NOMINATE A PRESI-
DENTIAL CANDIDATE HAS MADE CLEAR THE KEEN DISAPPOINTMENT
FELT BY THE POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT HERE. INTERIOR
SECRETARY LABELED THE DEVELOPMENT "NOXIOUS FOR DEMOCRACY".
HIS SENTIMENTS WERE ECHOED BY A HOST OF PRI LEADERS,
INCLUDING EVEN CTM PRESIDENT FIDEL VELAZQUEZ. SOME, SUCH
AS FORMER PRESIDENCY SECRETARY HUGO CERVANTES DEL RIO,
EXPRESSED AN ADMITTEDLY LAME HOPE THAT PAN WOULD CHANGE
ITS DECISION AND PUT FORTH A CANDIDATE " FOR THE GOOD OF
THE COUNTRY AND THE GOOD OF DEMOCRACY". PRESS REPORTED
THAT WHILE JLP CAMPAIGN WAS BEING PELTED WITH ROCKS IN
MICHOCAN (SEE REFTTEL), THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION IN THE
CAMPAIGN STAFF NONETHELESS WAS THE LACK OF ANY REAL OPPOSITION.

5. COMMENT: SOMEWHAT SURPRISING WAS THE ABSENCE OF
MUCH COMMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT PAN'S ABSTENTION WAS DUE
TO AN INTERNAL DIVISION INSTEAD OF A DELIBERATE DECISION
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ENDORSED BY A MAJORITY OF THE PARTY. THE GENERAL

LAMENTATION WAS ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED IN PARA 1 ABOVE, UNDERSCORING THE EXTENT OF THE PRI'S LONGING FOR THE OPPOSITION NEEDED TO MAINTAIN THE FACADE OF AN OPERATIVE TWO-PARTY DEMOCRACY. IN THE PAST PRI SPOKESMEN HAVE BELITTLED PAN BY DECLARING VOTER APATHY, "ABSTENCIONISMO", THE REAL ENEMY. AS ONE INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ANALYST PUT IT, "THE PRI MUST NOW PROVE (BY OVERCOMING VOTER ABSTENTIONISM) THAT ITS HEGEMONY IS LEGITIMATE". THOMPSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NOMINATION, PRESIDENT, OPPOSITION PARTIES, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MEXICO01105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760031-0881
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760118/aaaaapnb.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MEXICO 1051
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUL 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO PAN ABSTENTION
TAGS: PINT, MX, PAN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006